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FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0018

INFO RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS IMMEDIATE

RUEHUB/USINT HAVANA IMMEDIATE 0199

RUEAHND/CDRJTFB SOTO CANO HO IMMEDIATE

RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE

RUMIAAA/CDR USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL//CINC/POLAD// IMMEDIATE

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEAHND/COMJTF-B SOTO CANO HO IMMEDIATE

RHEFDIA/DIA WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

RUEIDN/DNI WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE

RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM J3 MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE

RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP WASHINGTON DC IMMEDIATE 1066

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

RUMIAAA/USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 TEGUCIGALPA 000532

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

WHA/CEN A/S TOM SHANNON

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV MARR KDEM HO

SUBJECT: HONDURAN COUP SITREP #9 (UNCLASSIFIED) 07/03/09 AS
OF NOON LOCAL (1400 EDT)

REF: A. TEGUCIGALPA 531

1B. STATE 69221

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Protests on Both Sides Continue; Some New Elements of
Unrest

11. (U) Beyond Tegucigalpa, the Honduran countryside remains largely peaceful with some isolated demonstrations on both sides of the issue. In Tegucigalpa, protests both in favor and against the regime are taking place as in past days with little incident. The pro-coup rally outside the Presidential Palace currently numbers approximately 10,000; the pro-Zelaya rally near the Clarion Hotel currently numbers approximately 3,000 and rally leaders have reported they plan to march to the OAS Mission in the early afternoon. The 2200 to 0500 (midnight to 0700 EDT) curfew remains in effect through Saturday morning. Emboffs have received unconfirmed reports of police arresting people under the curfew rules before curfew hours have begun, and have inquired with the National Police (HNP) authorities about these reports.

12. (SBU) Overnight, there was a small explosion at the KFC restaurant across the street from Toncontín International Airport; HNP report the explosion was caused by a small IED left in a trash can, but that it caused no injuries and no damage to the building. HNP also report an unidentified gunman fired shots at the Public Ministry (MP) building, again with no report of injuries. The HNP inform Post they are concerned with the increased number of Nicaraguans crossing the land border into Honduras, pointing to the arrest of 16 Nicaraguan nationals on July 2 for various acts of vandalism and minor attempts at civil unrest as a sign of things to come.

Political Developments

¶3. (SBU) Post is following Washington guidance regarding a no-contact policy (Ref B) with the Micheletti regime, while working to support the OAS lead through non-regime contacts.

¶4. (U) Two Congressional Deputies made public statements on July 2 declaring the actions of June 28 a coup and stating they and other Deputies did not vote in favor of the "unanimous" resolution on that date to remove Zelaya from the Presidency and install Micheletti in his place.

¶5. (SBU) Various members of the Zelaya Administration remain in hiding, expressing fear of arrest. Post has received repeated assurances from the Attorney General that no political arrests will be made, and Post has relayed these assurances to those in hiding, pointing out that one of the most vocal left-wing Zelaya supporters, journalist Eduardo Maldonado, has been out in public making frequent anti-coup statements in the past days. However, many of these officials have been linked with various corruption issues, and Post believes there is some potential for charges to be filed against them for legitimate legal cases, albeit for political ends, in the near future.

¶6. (SBU) At the request of the OAS representative in Honduras and the delegation traveling with OAS SYG Insulza, the Embassy provided an armored vehicle for Insulza's use, and contacted the Honduran Ministry of Security to ensure that a security detail would be provided during Insulza's July 3 visit. The Embassy also asked about planned security provisions around OAS headquarters, likely site of an afternoon meeting between Insulza and the G-16. Additionally, the Micheletti regime's foreign minister went

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to Toncontin airport ahead of Insulza's planned arrival in order to greet him. The Ambassador called Cardinal Rodriguez and Liberal Party candidate Elvin Santos to encourage them to contact Micheletti and explain that the foreign minister's presence would ensure that Insulza would not de-board the plane. Micheletti subsequently told his foreign minister to leave the airport.

Infrastructure and Communications

¶7. (U) Toncontin and San Pedro Sula airports remain open for international flights, and American, Continental and Delta airlines continue to operate flights as usual. Currently only ticketed travelers are being allowed into Toncontin's terminal. TACA continues to have difficulties as a result of an unrelated commercial dispute. As reported previously, some ad hoc roadblocks exist. Land borders with Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua have reopened to all traffic.

¶8. (U) There are still sporadic power and water outages zone by zone, but almost all television and radio broadcasts are back to normal, except for strongly pro-Zelaya Channel 36, which remains off the air, though Post has received word that channel may be restored today. Public Affairs notes that while political chatter remains heavily pro-coup, media are now broadcasting pro-Zelaya messages as well, including an exchange on a popular morning news talkshow July 3 between pro-coup former Supreme Court Chief Justice Vilma Morales Wilfredo Mendez, the executive director of the small opposition PINU party (social-democrat), who criticized the June 28 actions.
LLORENS